SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 64

By Yager

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Association upon its annual festival and pageant that preserves and continues the delicious legacy of poke sallet.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those worthy organizations that work with purpose and conviction to keep our Southern culture, especially Southern cuisine, alive for present and future generations; and

WHEREAS, one such worthy organization is the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Association, which founded the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Pageant in memory of Violet Webb, who in bygone days picked and cooked poke sallet (correct spelling) for her family; and

WHEREAS, the spelling of this "polk salad" pageant and festival mimics the spelling of the song *Polk Salad Annie*, which was written and performed by Tony Joe White and also popularized by Elvis Presley; and

WHEREAS, poke sallet is a green that grows wild in the South along river banks and fence rows and in fields; "sallet" is a word used to describe a green food that must be cooked before being eaten; and

WHEREAS, fondly known as "Spring Tonic" in the South, poke sallet must be parboiled in fresh water three times before being eaten and is usually prepared with bacon and/or eggs; and

WHEREAS, although they are toxic to humans, poke berries can be used for ink or dye, and poke ink was used for some of the signatures on The Declaration of Independence; and

WHEREAS, the first "Miss Polk Salad" crowned was Priscilla Martin of Rockwood in 2004; the first actual pageant was held in May 2005 in downtown Harriman, and the second

Miss Polk Salad coroneted was Melissa May, who presently serves as the hostess of the pageant; and

WHEREAS, Heather Williams served as Miss Polk Salad for 2006, and Jessica Weaver sparkled in that role in 2007; and

WHEREAS, originally serving as the entertainment for the Harriman Cruizin Car Show, the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Pageant has since grown leaps and bounds to include a full-day festival as part of this grand event; and

WHEREAS, the first full-day Tennessee "Polk Salad" Festival and Pageant was held in May 2008, with Sarah Wright being crowned Miss Polk Salad; Kate Barnett assumed the throne in 2009, and Ashleigh Watts is Miss Polk Salad for 2010; and

WHEREAS, held on the second Saturday of May each year in Historic Harriman's Riverfront Park on the Emory River, the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Festival features tons of family-friendly entertainment, including bluegrass and gospel music, square dancing, clogging, food and handmade crafts booths, and many free activities for children, including pony rides, a giant inflatable slide, and art activities; the 4-H clubs sponsor poultry and rabbit shows and a sheep-shearing contest; and

WHEREAS, American Legion Post 50 from Rockwood picks and cooks the poke sallet and sells a meal that includes poke sallet, pinto beans, fried green tomatoes, corn on the cob, and a homemade dessert; all the money raised helps fund local veterans' projects for the following year; and

WHEREAS, the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Festival and Pageant is an exemplary event that ensures the proliferation of our Southern culture and cuisine, while also providing entertainment for the entire family and raising funds to assist our courageous veterans, and it should be officially recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and commend the organizers and volunteers of the Tennessee "Polk Salad" Association upon their annual "polk salad" festival and pageant dedicated to preserving and continuing the delicious legacy of poke sallet. We wish these good

people all the best as they continue their culinary and cultural activities to promote poke sallet, the Spring Tonic of the South.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.